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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 000628

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/SPG, SE WILLIAMSON  
NSC FOR BPITTMAN AND CHUDSON  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KDEM](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: DANGEROUS LIES, DOUBLE-GAMING, AND DECEIT: INSIDE  
THE SPLM-NCP "PARTNERSHIP"

REF: A. KHARTOUM 617

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 604

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. GNU Presidential Advisor and NCP loyalist Ghazi Salah Eddin claims that the SPLM falsely accuses the NCP of conniving tactics to undercut the SPLM and the CPA. Salah Eddin complained about SPLM party disorganization, echoed sentiments that SPLM party leadership is splintering, and predicted that the May 2008 SPLM Convention will not happen. Despite its internal problems, Salah Eddin said that the SPLM is still the NCP's "first choice" for a partner in the 2009 elections and confessed that the NCP is still trying to woo the SPLM into a partnership agreement. He warned, however, that if the SPLM chooses to play games with the NCP, the NCP will play rough. The SPLM "underestimates the NCP's ability to survive," he quipped. END SUMMARY.

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THE SPLM "SPORT" OF ACCUSING THE NCP  
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[1](#)2. (C) In a meeting with CDA Fernandez on 23 April, Salah Eddin said the NCP "acted cautiously" and responded "moderately" to the 12 April GoSS decision to postpone the census in the South. Although the census is less critical than the CPA issues of Abyei, the elections and the referendum, the census is an "important issue", said Salah Eddin and the NCP has been and is "interested in a census." "We know the intricacies of the SPLM," said Salah Eddin and "we are victims of their own internal problems." According to Salah Eddin, making accusations against the NCP has become an SPLM sport, such as GoSS accusations that census preparations in the South were hindered by the NCP (i.e. - the prevention of IDP returns, a shortage of questionnaires for the South, etc.) in order to force an undercount of the South (ref B).

[1](#)3. (C) As for the conduct of the census, Salah Eddin said that there have only been minor problems so far. The issue receiving the most media attention is the SPLM Deputy Governor of Southern Kordofan's unilateral declaration that SPLM members in Southern Kordofan should boycott the census (septel). "This will result in an undercount of the SPLM's own people in the Nuba Mountains," said Salah Eddin. "We've asked Salva to talk to this guy," he continued. "We hope the problem will be resolved soon." (Note: On 23 April, the Central Bureau of Statistics, which is responsible for census enumeration in all Northern states, sent a team to Southern Kordofan to help resolve this issue. Enumeration is moving forward in Southern Kordofan without major problems. According to the UN Population Fund, the only potential problem of a boycott is in the Southern Kordofan capital of

Kadugli. End note.)

14. (C) CDA Fernandez asked the on-message Salah Eddin how the NCP would respond if the GoSS rejects the census results even if the census is conducted fairly and accurately. "We intend to remain patient," said Salah Eddin, "and will calculate our moves." The NCP is aware, as is the public, that based on the pre-census mapping numbers, the South only resulted in 18 percent of the population of the country, far less than the expansive expectations of many in the SPLM leadership. If the official census numbers reveal a population percentage that is anything less than what the South currently holds in the National Assembly (34 percent) - and they will - then the NCP is prepared to deal with further SPLM accusations on a rational basis. "We could well decide, in consultation with the SPLM, to keep the status quo," Ghazi noted, "but it will be a card we will have to play no doubt." (Note: A 16 April GoSS press statement somewhat foolishly foreshadows the GoSS' move to reject the use of final census population figures for re-configuring wealth and power-sharing arrangements. Such a reconfiguration based on population numbers is stipulated by the CPA. End note.)

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NCP SALIVATES OVER SPLM IN-FIGHTING  
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15. (C) On the issue of elections, Salah Eddin claimed that he is almost certain that the SPLM does not want them. The NCP does want elections and thinks it is well-positioned to succeed. He postulated that elections would further divide what is already a fractured and confused SPLM. "We are always trying to figure out what their real intentions are," said Salah Eddin. A first to confess this opinion, he doubts that the SPLM Convention, planned for mid-May, will take place. He said that many SPLMers close to GoSS President

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Salva Kiir, such as Deputy Secretary General of the SPLM for the Southern Sector Anne Itto, failed to secure party nominations. A convention, he said, means re-distribution of power within the SPLM, which is very dangerous for the SPLM. According to Salah Eddin the Convention will be a good indicator of how the SPLM will conduct itself prior to and during elections. (Note: In a recent meeting with SPLM Deputy Secretary for the SPLM in the Northern Sector Yasser Arman, Arman indicated that the SPLM Convention dates may "slip" a little. End note.)

16. (C) Salah Eddin said the NCP prefers an alliance with the SPLM ahead of 2009 elections. After all, it is legitimate for parties to establish allies and build coalitions in advance of elections, he said, and "we have told them they are our first choice." Salah Eddin explained that it is vital for the SPLM and the NCP to remain in partnership (and in power) so as not to "lose" the CPA. "We are two parties that are in agreement and we must stick together," he said. According to Salah Eddin, the NCP has repeatedly asked the SPLM if it would be interested in a partnership, but the SPLM, and in particular Yasser Arman and Pagan Amun, are "evasive" about the issue. Salah Eddin explained that it is difficult to convince some SPLMers that a partnership is the right thing because they think that the NCP is the "arch-enemy." "What they underestimate," said Eddin, "is the NCP's ability to survive." If the SPLM tries to gut the NCP in elections (as would be Minister of Cabinet Affairs Pagan Amun's preferred choice), said Salah Eddin, it is playing a "dangerous game." "The NCP can also plot," he warned. The CDA stated that it is easy for the two parties to undermine and destabilize one another. He warned that playing double-games (i.e.- telling each other one thing and telling the public and allies another) further aggravates the situation.

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THE FEAR OF CHANGING AFRICAN BOUNDARIES  
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¶7. (C) A well-read, big-picture social scientist and savvy politician, Salah Eddin voiced concern over the prospect of changing borders in Africa. "The world is being overtaken by new problems such as rising food prices and shortages," said Salah Eddin. Sudan is in a good position as a "powerhouse" in the region to generate food. Even though he is a unionist, Salah Eddin claimed he is "preparing himself for separation" (of Sudan and in other areas of Sub-Saharan Africa). He claimed that northern Sudanese have more in common with citizens from the Horn of Africa (particularly Eritreans and Ethiopians) than southern Sudanese. That being said, he commented that the NCP "needs the SPLM until at least 2011." He said that the NCP is going to try to help the SPLM transform itself into more of a political party over the coming years.

¶8. (C) Ghazi said that he expects, and counsels the party as such, that many of Africa's colonial borders will not hold because of increasing pressures to be caused by food and energy problems. "The secession of South Sudan could be the least of all our problems," he noted. He added that the SPLM had been surprised when the Kenya crisis had caused a cut-off of the South's lifeline to the outside world, "for once they were happy to be part of a larger entity called Sudan, with a pipeline and port all on Sudanese soil." He added that the SPLM has not yet resolved its world-view of Sudan, "are they a national party or only for Southerners?" Thoughtful "Northerners" like Blue Nile Governor Agar, who is actually an African Funj tribesman, know this dilemma but "no SPLM leader who doesn't have a tribe in the South has much sway in the party."

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COMMENT  
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¶9. (C) The NCP is well aware of the divisions within the SPLM (ref A) and often has cultivated these divisions. The mis-steps over whether to go forward with the census in the South provided yet another clue that Salva Kiir is facing dissent within his own party - dissent which has its own Southern, tribal dimension. As Salah Eddin notes, the SPLM Convention, if it happens anytime soon, will be a litmus test for how cohesive and strong the SPLM will be prior to and during the elections. We can be sure that the NCP will capitalize on the SPLM's leadership weaknesses (as it does with other Northern parties in order to co-opt allies and undercut opposition party strength). The SPLM may be more open to an elections alliance or outright delay with the NCP

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if the NCP offers it a continuation of the current power and wealth sharing formulas through 2011.  
FERNANDEZ